

Weymouth. Feby 9th 1851

My Dear Mr Estlin,

The Annual Box of Bells, Reports, & other missives was dispatched to R. D. Webb on Thursday last. The Bristol package was directed to Mrs R. Thomas and Mr May wrote I know to Miss Carpenter, whether to yourself or no I am ignorant, for though I was with him all day at the A. S. Office assisting in the packing, there was so much hurry & confusion, that I hardly knew where I was doing myself far less what my neighbours, (for quite a number were assisting) might be about. The Bells are all properly directed and I suppose Mr Thomas will send Miss Estlin such as would more naturally fall under her supervision. Or as come

of her & your delicate health
Mr May thought it best to
give the trouble of the general
distribution to Mrs Thomas. I had
intended to have sent several
Bells to be presented in such
quarters as you might think
best, but I fear in the haste
(with tide & time hurrying us)
this was omitted. I hope Mr May
put in a sufficient number of
reports of the Miss Society, as I
think it the best. Mr Luning
has ever written, & she calculated
to set the whole subject fairly
before people. I intended to have
written to Miss Estlin & yourself
by the package, because it is
very disappointing to me to open
a package & find no scrap of
writing therein. I think very
humbly of my own epistolary
powers, but yet believe that

Miss E. would be sorry not to find
a line, particularly when she
was so good as to take advantage
of your box to send me sundry
notes & letters from the perusal
of which I derive great pleasure.
I have therefore determined to fore-
-state the arrival of the Box by
writing by next Wednesday's mail.
Thus shall I begin the year
with a clear conscience and be
prepared to be very grateful for
any letters with which you or
Mary may hereafter favour
me.

I hope you will approve of
that part of the Bazaar Report
in which allusion is made to
the Glasgow element. The Perth
sister & others had asked very
earnestly for more information
on the point at issue & I thought
under all the circumstances
it would be singular, or would
at least appear so, were I in the

Printed Report to ignore the whole matter. It would have appeared ingenuous. But I hope we shall hear no more of the matter, for I hate all religious controversy even en amicum. I am hardly worthy to have been born in metaphysical New England where 30 yrs ago every old woman was a perfect Mause Headrigg.

Do you know I feel a little ashamed at the credit I get for religious liberality? I really do not deserve it. In the first place I do not suppose my opinions are by any means as stringent as those of the Evangelical Dissenters in your country and personally (speaking after the manner of men, pius men you know) I have been educated a worldling rather than a religious & have of course none of those narrow bigoted tendencies that education is an illiberal scit must occur.

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I do not² mean that any civil-
stances should excuse intolerance,
(unless that word in its literal
sense,) but ignorance, if any
thing should be that excuse.
Where there does not exist, I
believe all this fighting about
creeds springs from our right
by joining & selfishness. Still less
can I excuse any thing that
looks like persecution. I don't
believe any body was ever
burnt but that the burner
was full of a Satanic spirit.
People cannot in the spirit of Christ
commit crimes that shock hu-
manity. It interests me very
much reading your newspaper
in regard to the Eastern Bitter.
I had almost said Popish
but remembered that Cardinal
Wiseman was in the minority
& so stand my ground. In the univer-
sal agitation there seems to
be a new era Great Britain, including

all claps and condilions, I am
very much reminded of the
Anti Slavery conflict here. The
resem. Novice is in the univer-
sality of the agitation. I hope the
Dissidents will not make fools
of themselves by under taking
the battles of the Establishment.
A thought I have very little love
for the Catholics as such, it annoys
me to see the trait & shield with
which Cardinal Wiseman makes
his points, how astutely his writings
are adopted to English taste &
feeling.

Our recent Annual
Meeting was ^{not so} ~~more~~ ^{interesting}
~~than~~ ^{as} usual. This arose in part
from the illness of Mr Thomp-
son his presence having been greatly
relied upon, and partly from
some mal arrangements on our
part by which very boring speakers
were permitted to occupy a great
portion of the time. The audience
was however very large,

and the Liberator Price was pronounced by all the most successful orators of the kind ever held.

In your letter to Mr May you speak a little doubtfully of the propriety of Mr Thompson's course should he take any very prominent action in respect to the Anti Slavery agitation. If I understand you, you think that his position as a Member of the British Parliament should incapacitate him from giving as any public help except in a very incidental and occasional manner. This is not my opinion, nor would it I think, my dear Mr Estlin, be yours were you in this country and fully cognizant of all our circumstances in the way that any one alone could be, by personal observation. I am not one of the people who underrate

conventionalities of any kind.
They are very useful things in
their place, many of them embrac-
ing an amount of worldly wis-
dom quite necessary in the right
management of affairs. In all the
ordinary business of life it is best
to abide by them. Unlike ordinary
circumstances it might not be
desirable that the legislators of
one country should very actively
interfere with the concerns of
another, for very naturally they
might not possess the requisite
knowledge & again they have no
that direct personal interest which
supplies many deficiencies & is in-
deed my main argument in
defence of universal suffrage.

There are many abuses in Eng-
land which we might like to
see abated, but we do not know
the best way for you to set about
the work; a general expression of
opinion is all we could give

that such & such things should³
be done, leaving it for people
better conversant with the subject
to point out the details. But
here is the thing to be noted;
you have no sober shadowing,
and horrible imagery like those
of Slavery, an institution which
is an outrage against our
common humanity. We the
Abolitionists feel that here is an
great advantage ground. No
other set of people can in the
nature of the case occupy such
a position. As it is for the most
essential rights of man we
are contending, we can call
for the direct help of every
man & nobody is out of his place
who stands by our side. I should
not think it amiss if Victoria or
her throne, gave us the aid of
her testimony, unless it be under-
stood as moral assistance &
nothing more. George Thompson

came to this country many
years ago and performed a
work whose results are inalien-
able. Now that he visits us again
shall the fact of his being an
M. P., in any important particu-
lar alter his course of conduct?
The immense importance of the
subject ^{as some} & the fact that he can
speak in behalf of the Cause as
no other man can do, settles the
question of his duty in my eyes.
In the pursuance of this work there
is of course great occasion for
wisdom, truth & discretion. I can
assure you that Mr Thompson is
pre eminent in all ^{these} ~~they~~ fully
equal his eloquence. Can I say
more? It is because of this
rare union of zeal and judgment
that we find his services so all
important. You may think it a
worldly maxim, but I am very
apt to be a believer in the doctrine

that "principle is good conduct." I tried
by this text, Mr T.'s labours are
very good conduct. And here I
come to the point, that were you
here you would think just as I
do. Wherever Mr Thompson lectures,
doubts are removed, prejudice
is overcome, conscience is aroused
the flagging hopes & zeal of the
faithful are encouraged, in short
an observer cannot but perceive
that a ^{very, great} ~~perceptible~~ impulse is
given to the good work. I speak
in sincerity when I say that
I sometimes think that were
he to labour systematically
for the next five years in this
country, the system of American
Slavery would in that time
fall. He prevents those foolish
& unhappy misunderstandings
& misrepresentations that occur
in the cause, can work with any
body & every body, & do the

same time keep all the eyes
of all on the work before them &
the exclusion of extraneous or
sectional topics. Ought a man
having this power to refrain from
its use because his good will
be evil spoken of? Ought he
to refrain from permitting his
conduct for a similar reason?
The scandalous & malignant stuff
with which the newspapers over flow
in respect to him & his mission
are no fair criterion of the views of
the people. The common people hear
him gladly. He could have an
unobstructed audience, counted by
thousands, thousands who would go to
hear no one else over all the New
England States, excepting Boston &
perhaps one or two other sea port
towns. The Cause has advanced
as far as it can go without some
fresh infusion of life. We must
have new converts, people who
will come into the work with

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